



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

### Winterbourne Earls Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Summerlug  
Winterbourne Earls  
Salisbury  
SP4 6HQ

**Diocese: Salisbury**

Local authority: Wiltshire

Date of inspection: 12 March 2014

Date of last inspection: 24 March 2009

School's unique reference number: 126372

Headteacher: Jenny Purchase

Inspector's name and number: Andrew Rickett 201

#### School context

Winterbourne Earls is a smaller than average primary school with 185 children. The large majority of children are of a white British heritage. About a quarter of children are from families at nearby military bases. The number of children with learning needs is within the national average. The proportion eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average. Children enter the school with levels of attainment generally in line with national expectations. Attendance is within the top 20% of all schools nationally.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Winterbourne Earls as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The quality of the opportunities for children to reflect makes a significant impact on their spiritual development.
- The extent to which the school's Christian mission statement is lived out in the classroom contributes to the quality of teaching and learning.
- The commitment, understanding and enthusiasm of the school's leaders for the school's Christian ethos ensure that it is continually developing.

#### Areas to improve

- Develop the school's understanding of how to identify opportunities for children to engage in spiritual experiences through challenging questions across the whole curriculum but specifically through science initially.
- Develop the role of worship leaders by giving them greater opportunities to plan and lead acts of worship.
- Ensure that as the school moves forward in developing the impact of its Christian ethos, so current systems to monitor and evaluate evolve accordingly.

#### The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding at meeting the needs of all learners

The successful review of the school's ethos in 2012 enabled the school to give a new

interpretation to its Christian mission through a process which involved all members of the school community. The school now has a much clearer sense of its purpose as a church school to love every child and to nurture their wellbeing and academic progress in a happy and positive learning environment. At the same time, the whole school identified specific values through which it expresses its Christian character. These values of love, forgiveness, hope and compassion have explicit roots in Christian teaching and form the basis for collective worship planning but are also firmly embedded in classroom practice. This was particularly evident in the religious education (RE) lessons observed during the inspection when teachers challenged children in a way that carefully supported their progress. For example, teachers used encouragement skilfully so that no child's answer was disregarded. This emphasis on positive attitudes towards learning contributes to children's academic achievement which is consistently above national expectations. The school has worked hard since the last inspection to develop reflective areas throughout the school. These now make a significant contribution towards the development of the children's spirituality. Because each class interprets these reflective areas in different contexts, there is a range of opportunities through which children can engage in a spiritual way. For example, a year six class, when reflecting on World War I, produced some particularly poignant poems about experience in the trenches, whereas another class based their reflective area on a celebration of spring. These reflective areas are changed regularly and often focus on the core Christian values and worship themes. The school is aware of the need to develop its understanding of spirituality across all areas of the curriculum through the use of challenging questions. The school is keen to use its unique expertise in science to explore how spirituality can be developed particularly with regard to this subject's links with RE. Children treat each other with care and respect and are enthusiastic towards their learning. Relationships throughout the school reflect the school's mission to love and nurture one another. Parents spoken to feel that the school does this very well. They say that their children are comfortable to talk about matters of faith and belief and that the school encourages children to ask their own questions. This was seen in RE lessons when children responded very enthusiastically on being challenged by the teacher. Religious education has a high profile in the overall curriculum and makes a significant contribution to the promotion of the school's Christian ethos.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding**

Acts of worship at Winterbourne Earls are a vital part of how the school defines its Christian character. It is through the messages given in collective worship that the school promotes its explicit Christian vision and provides opportunities for children to encounter God. Children and parents understand this and appreciate its importance in helping to create 'the things that make the school a special place'. When asked about collective worship children are clear that it is a time to think about God and a time to pray to Him and that this makes it a distinct time in the school day. Messages given in worship are closely linked to the school's core values and its mission to love and nurture every child through an explicit emphasis on the teaching of Christianity. Bible stories, prayers, hymns and time for reflection ensure that all acts of worship have the elements that help children to worship. The use of simple liturgical words of welcome and to send children out at the end as well as the saying of the prayers, help children to understand the Anglican tradition of their worship. They have a very good understanding of the stories that tell the life of Jesus and can explain the place that He has at the centre of Christian faith together with God the Father and the Holy Spirit. Children have an excellent understanding of the purpose of prayer. For example, they explain that prayers do not always seem to be answered but that God may have His own reason for doing this. Children are very positive about collective worship and respond with enthusiasm. For example, during the worship observed children sang well and were attentive throughout. The introduction of children as worship leaders has made a very positive contribution to the involvement of children in leading worship. The worship leaders are very proud of their role in helping to make acts of worship special to the whole school community. They are keen to see their contribution develop through further opportunities to plan worship and to be involved in its

evaluation. The school has effective procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the impact of collective worship and have used feedback from children and parents to inform their practice. In achieving this, the school has fully addressed an area for development from the previous report.

**The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is outstanding**

The headteacher has ensured that the school has substantially moved forward since the previous inspection by fully addressing the areas for development identified in the last report so that they now make a significant contribution to the Christian ethos and impact on the children's academic progress and well-being. With this progress, combined with the review of the school's core values and mission statement, the school has deepened the impact of its Christian ethos by embedding it at the heart of the life of the school. The headteacher is committed to the continual development of the Christian ethos and is fully supported by her staff who have a very clear understanding of the purpose of being a church school. The governors make an effective contribution to the school's self-evaluation processes as a church school and clearly articulate how the Christian mission makes an impact on the lives of the children. This is because of their involvement in the monitoring and evaluation of both collective worship and religious education along with gathering evidence from interviews with children. The overall quality of the school's self-evaluation is excellent with areas for future development being accurately identified. The school ensures that all members of the school community have the opportunity to be involved in the evaluation process through regular feedback. The leadership and management, including governors, now need to ensure that as the school continues to develop as a church school, so its systems to monitor and evaluate evolve accordingly. The local church community, as well as members of the deanery, make a valuable contribution to the life of the school through the regular leadership of collective worship and in the contribution that members of the church community make to the life of the school. The vicar, for example, is fully involved in the life of the school. Religious education has a high profile in the school curriculum and the coordinator makes sure that the subject is carefully monitored and that she is fully aware of the priorities for improvement.

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